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"INSTANTS D'UN OPERA DE PEKIN" FOR SOLO PIANO BY QIGANG CHEN

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“INSTANTS D’UN OPERA DE PEKIN” FOR SOLO PIANO BY QIGANG CHEN

DMA PROJECT

A project submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in the
College of Fine Arts
at the University of Kentucky

By

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Lexington, Kentucky

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Lexington, Kentucky

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ABSTRACT OF DMA PROJECT

“INSTANTS D’UN OPERA DE PEKIN” FOR SOLO PIANO BY QIGANG CHEN

My monograph focuses on the *Instants d’un Opera de Pekin* by the contemporary Chinese composer Qigang Chen in particular how he incorporates Chinese musical elements with Western compositional techniques.

The main focus of this study is an analysis with emphasis on performance issues. A brief introduction to Chinese music elements is provided to establish a context. This document provides brief information about Chinese scale modes and instruments.

KEYWORDS: Qigang Chen, Pentatonic Scales, Piano Variation.

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To my family

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Many classically trained musicians, including Chinese performers, have not had exposure to traditional Chinese music and therefore have not developed a deep understanding of this repertory. Whether approaching this music from the perspective of music theory, musicology, or performance, one should cultivate a knowledge of traditional Chinese music in order to better understand how the two traditions have influenced one another.

Western music began to gain acceptance and appreciation in China in the early twentieth century. From 1919 to 1960 there were frequent educational exchanges between China and Western countries. During this time, conservatories, based on Western models, were established in many places throughout China. For example, the Shanghai Conservatory, which was founded in 1927, offered young Chinese musicians the opportunity to study in a formal way in their own country. Students also had opportunities to study and perform abroad. As they mastered the various styles of Western art music, they began to capture international attention, and when returning home, they made significant contributions to Chinese musical culture. This interchange has continued in a vigorous manner until the present day, except for the interruption of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976).

One of the most influential musicians to travel to the West early on was Yuanren Zhao (1892-1982). Zhao developed an interest in Western art music through his father, who loved the music of J.S. Bach, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, among other classical composers. Although he did study piano briefly as a youth, at age eighteen he was awarded

a full scholarship to attend Cornell University, where he majored in both mathematics and physics. However, he continued to study music as an elective subject. After Cornell he pursued graduate work at Harvard University, from 1915 to 1918, earning his Ph.D. in philosophy. During this time, he also devoted himself to musical composition. Zhao was the first Chinese composer to write a classical piano piece, called *March of Peace* in 1914, in response to the beginning of World War I. *March of Peace*, which was published the next year, is a short, rather traditional piano solo, in that it is tonal with simple phrases and clear cadences. He did, however, incorporate Chinese folk melodies into the texture.

At this time, a new generation of scholars began to explore traditional Chinese music in more depth and to incorporate Chinese musical elements into new piano works. A large repertory of works for piano began to develop from a grouping body of Chinese composers, including the early work *The Cowherd's Flute* (1934) by Lvding He¹, *Liu Zhuang Variation* (1956) by Zhuang Liu², *By the Songhua River* (1967) by Shigunag Cui³, *Autumn Moon on a Calm Lake* (1975) by Peixun Chen⁴, and later *Recollection* (1978) by

¹ Lvding He (1903-1999): was a Chinese composer and music educator. He was also the director of Shanghai Conservatory of Music.

² Zhuang Liu (1932-): is a Chinese composer. She served as a teacher at Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing in 1960.

³ Shigunag Cui (1948-): is a Chinese pianist and composer.

⁴ Peixun Chen (1921-2007): born in Hongkong. He studied composition in London (1937) and Shanghai (1939-41). In 1949, he became a teacher at Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing.

Dun Tan⁵, *Duo Ye* (1984) by Yi Chen⁶, *Pi Huang* (1995) by Chao Zhang⁷ and *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin* (2000) by Qigang Chen. These works were inspired by their exposure to Chinese folk songs as well as traditional Chinese instruments like pipa, erhu and suona, which they emulated in their compositions.

In the present study, I will examine how Qigang Chen accomplished this.

⁵ Dun Tan (1957-): is a Chinese composer and conductor, he studied composition at Central Cnservatory of Music in Beijing in 1977, and then he moved to New York city to pursue his graduate study. In 1986 he moved to New York where he completed his studies at Columbia University (DMA 1993) with Chou Wen-Chung, Mario Davidovsky, and George Edwards
Chen, Baolu. 2016. Tan dun's "eight memories in watercolor, op.1": Strategies for pianists and a version comparison. Ph.D. diss., The Ohio State University, <http://ezproxy.uky.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.uky.edu/docview/1870786453?accountid=11836> (accessed December 2, 2018)
Recollection is his first work when he studied in the conservatory.

⁶ Yi Chen (1953-): She received a master's degree in music composition at Central Cnservatory of Music in Beijing in 1986. In 1993, she got the Ph.D. degree from Columbia University.
<http://composers21.com/compdocs/chenyi.htm>.

⁷ Chao Zhang: Chiness pianist and composer. He is a professor at Minzu University of China.

Chapter 2 Biographical Sketch of Qigang Chen

Qigang Chen is a prolific and renowned composer. Nonetheless few Chinese people knew of him until he established an international reputation as the music director for the opening ceremony of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, having composed the Olympic theme song, *You and Me*.

Qigang Chen was born in Shanghai, China, on August 28, 1951⁸. His early intellectual training and incipient interest in the arts were encouraged and modeled by his father, who practiced Chinese calligraphy and painting, and was devoted of Peking Opera. Chen studied clarinet and at age thirteen performed in the middle-school affiliate of the Central Music Conservatory. While a student at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, Chen changed his major to composition and with Zhongrong Luo (1924-) for five years, earning his bachelor's degree in 1983. After graduating, through a grant from the Chinese government, he went to France to pursue graduate studies in composition and from 1984 to 1988 was the only and last student of Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992). While in France, he also worked with composers Ivo Malec⁹, Betsy Jolas¹⁰, Claude Ballif¹¹ and Jacques Castérède¹². Meanwhile, his “Yuan” for symphony orchestra (1987) won the 27th

⁸ Oxford University Press, “Qigang Chen”
<https://doi.org.ezproxy.uky.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.49468>
(accessed Nov 23, 2018).

⁹ Ivo Malec (1925-): French composer, conductor and music educator.

¹⁰ Betsy Jolas (1926-): She was born in Paris. From 1971 to 1974 she served as Olivier Messiaen's assistant.

¹¹ Claude Ballif (1924-2004): was a French composer and served as a teacher at the Paris Conservatoire from 1971 to 1990.

¹² Jacques Castérède (1924-2016): was French composer and pianist. He studied musical analysis with Olivier Messiaen.

International Contest of Symphony Composition of Trieste, Italy, winning this composition became a milestone in the development of his career.

Chen, like all Chinese artists, had to deal with the formidable constraints of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), which forbade engaging with activities associated with Western countries. Although not much is known about Chen's activities during this period, the repression of artistic expression caused him to delay his formal education for another six years after high school. According to Chen, it was not until his studies with Messiaen that he was afforded the freedom to discover his unique compositional voice. Since studying with this French master, he has been devoted to exploring greater possibilities and with a new creativity imperative.

Chen has an impressive and diverse catalogue of compositions, with more than Forty-five written works, including chamber music, concertos, symphonic works, songs, music for ballet, and music for films. Many of these works are being performed throughout the world. Chen received the honor of having a special concert devoted entirely to his music. On 20 February 2018, the Orchestre de Paris performed the following works: *Le souvenir* (for flute and harp, 1985)¹³, *Wu Xing* (for symphony orchestra, 1999), *Voyage d'un rêve* (for flute, harp, percussion, and string trio, 1987, rev.2017), *Reffet d'un temps disparu* (for cello and orchestra, 1995) and *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin* (for piano, 2000). This was the first concert of the Orchestre de Paris devoted entirely to work for a single Asian composer.

¹³ *Le souvenir*: This is his first composition in France.

Chen's in-depth study in both China and France, has allowed him to combine traditional Chinese musical styles with Western idioms, with a particular emphasis on twentieth-century modernism, which he learned from Messiaen. Other composers who have influenced Chen's music include Debussy and Ligeti. This blending of Chinese and Western musical elements has won broad appeal for international audiences.

In 2015 Chen established the Gonggeng College contemporary music "festival" in Suichang (Zhejiang Province). Participation in the programs offered in 2015 and 2017 were without cost to the students who were accepted from all over the world and includes accommodation¹⁴. During the program, Chen offered personal study time together with students as well as open discussions about the music, rather than giving master classes. Despite Chen success and fame, he is very generous with his time and eager to learn from younger students as well as guide them in their craft.

¹⁴ <http://www.chenqigang.com/yygf.php> (accessed November 23, 2018)

Chapter 3 Overview to the Peking Opera

This chapter provides a brief introduction to the Peking Opera. A rudimentary knowledge of the genre is necessary to understand and appreciate Chen's achievement in writing *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*. Peking Opera, or *jingju*, is one the most popular art forms in China culture. Jingju originated in the late seventeenth century during the Qing dynasty (1644 to 1911), reaching its artistic heights in the eighteenth-century. It was designated as "Peking Opera" in 1790 and became known as the "national opera" in the early twentieth century. This art form requires a broad range of skills, including speech, song, dance, and acrobatics. The stories are based on Chinese folklore, history, and events of everyday life.

The genre was originally called "Pihunag opera". The name was derived by taking the second syllable from the name of each of the two main aria types that form the core of Peking Opera: *Xipi* and *erhuang* (*pi* from *xipi* and *huang* from *erhuang*). *Xipi* is associated with more positive circumstances with the music moving at fast tempos and with lively, often syncopated, rhythms; whereas *erhuang* was used to express more serious or darker emotional states, with the music moving slower and more somber in affect. Both aria types employ a variety of melodic and rhythmic gestures, all of which are accompanied by a bowed fiddle called *jinghu*. The *jinghu* used for *xipi* is smaller and higher in pitch compared to the somewhat larger, deeper-in-pitch *jinghu* used for *erhuang*. These two styles also

employ different modes, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. Other accompanying instruments include *pipa*, *haidi*, *jingerhu* and *luo*¹⁵.

In addition, a third style called *xing xian* style also plays a significant role in Peking Opera. Commonly accompanied by *jinghu*, *xing xian* is more flexible since it does not have a fixed role or position in the formal scheme of the Opera, serving instead as interludes and accompaniment for speech, dialogues, dance, or acrobatics. Since it is not written out in the score, nor does it have precise tempo markings, *Xing xian* is improvisatory in nature. Repetition is frequently used in *Instances* in order to lengthen interludes leading to the next section. It is the stylistic freedom employed in *xing xian* that led Chen to base his *Instances d'un Opera de Pekin* on this style, rather than from the more common *xipi* and *erhuang* styles.

Instances d'un Opera de Pekin (also known by its English name, Moments from a Peking Opera) is one of Chen's quintessential piano works. It is a single movement work for piano that is based on the principle of theme and variations. Chen wrote the piece in 2000 for the final round of Messiaen International Piano Competition. All the competitors in the piano group were required to perform *Instances* during the course of the competition. Chen had the challenge of writing in a style that was reminiscent of Messiaen, but he was also true to his own creative voice. Chen also chose to incorporate elements of Chinese musical styles. Since Peking Opera is the most representative and well-known Chinese

¹⁵ The *jinghu* is made of bamboo with two strings and has a sharp timbre.

Pipa: Chinese lute.

Haidi: Chinese flute.

Jingrhu: is made of wood with more mellow timbre and an octave lower than *jinghu*.

Luo: Chinese drum.

music, he decided to use this genre to base his new composition. *Instants d'un opera de Pekin* exists in two versions. The first version, completed in 2000, was 196 measures in length, while the second version, published in 2005, was expanded to 242 measures¹⁶.

¹⁶ Yunnan Li, "CROSS-CULTURAL SYNTHESIS IN CHEN QIGANG'S PIANO COMPOSITION *INSTANTS D'UN OPÉRA DE PÉKIN*" (DMA diss, The University of North Carolina 2012), 24

Chapter 4 The Structure of *Instant's d'un Opera de Pekin*

The overall structure on Chen's *Instant's* is laid out in Table 1. He adopted two basic compositional styles from the Peking Opera in *Instant's*: *Sanban* and *Yaoban*. The first of these, is associated with the variation form called *Banqiang Ti* in Peking Opera; the overall tempo scheme of *Banqiang Ti* is: *Sanban* (Lento)-Adagio-Moderato-Allegro-*Sanban* (Lento). *Sanban* not only indicates tempo but also involves the frequent use of fermatas, which have the effect of stretching or elongating the rhythm. Example 1 provides a good illustration of *sanban* in the ending measure with its five successive fermatas over sustained chords. Another style typical in Peking Opera is called *Yaoban*, in which the melody and the accompaniment are notated without bar lines, which invites a freely interpretation of the melodic material. Chen employs this *yaoban* stylistic feature in numerous places in *Instant's*. Example 2 demonstrates another way that Chou used this technique, in which we can hear the influence of both Debussy and Messiaen in the parallel motion of the parts and the rich vertical sonorities.

The image shows a musical score for a piano accompaniment. The score is written for three staves: a single treble staff at the top and a grand staff (treble and bass) below it. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The tempo/mood marking is 'ad lib. (molto lento)'. The dynamics are marked 'ppp' (pianissimo) on both the treble and bass staves. The melody in the treble staff consists of a series of notes, each followed by a fermata. The accompaniment in the grand staff consists of sustained chords, also marked with fermatas. A red box highlights the first five measures of the melody line. The measure number '242' is written at the beginning of the treble staff. The score ends with a double bar line.

Example 1. Qi-gang Chen, *Instant's d'un Opera de Pekin*, m.242.

239 ♩ = 72 *flou*

pp

240 *pp* *rit.*

241 *più lento Chantant* *rit.*

pp *smorzando* *ppp*

Example 2. Qi-gang Chen, *Instantes d'un Opera de Pekin*, m.239 to m.241

Table 1. Variation form of *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*

Formal Unit	Measure Numbers	Thematic Content
Opening	mm. 1-8 (introduction) mm. 9-11(theme) mm. 11-19 (bridge)	Themes 1, 2
Variation 1	mm. 20-35	Theme 1
Transition1	mm. 36-46	Themes 1, 2
Variation 2	mm. 47-62	Theme 1
Transition 2	mm. 62-68	Themes 1, 2
Variation 3	mm. 69-95	Themes 1, 2
Transition 3	mm. 96-108	Theme 1
Variation 4	mm. 109-133	Themes 1, 2
Transition 4	mm. 134-156	Themes 1, 2
Variation 5	mm. 156-177	Theme 1
Transition 5	mm. 178-187	Themes 1, 2
Variation 6	mm. 188-201	Themes 1, 2
Transition 6	mm. 201-209	Theme 1
Variation 7	mm. 210-238	Themes 1, 2
Coda	mm. 239-242	Themes 1, 2

Chapter 5 Chinese Pentatonic Scales and Modes in *Instances*

Introduction to the Five Main Pentatonic Modes in Chinese Music

Since *Instances* uses pentatonic scales often, it is important to understand the approach to these scales in traditional Chinese music in order to appreciate the melodic invention employed in *Instances d'un Opera de Pekin*.

The five pentatonic scales are at the very core of traditional Chinese music. Ancient musicians named each scale degree: *gong* (C), *shang* (D), *jue* (E), *zhi* (G), and *yu* (A), with each being able to serve as a tonic. The theory of these scales dates back to beginning of the Zhou dynasty (2,600 years ago). In practice musicians derived twelve pitches by measuring the length of tubes or strings. Using this method, (called the “tripartite method”), ancient musicians considered the perfect fifth to be the most harmonious. Assuming that the fundamental is C, they arrived at an order of fifths C, G, D, A, E, thus a set of pitches without semitones, and rearranged them to fit within an octave: C, D, E, G, A. There are no minor seconds between adjacent notes in pentatonic scales, but intervals of major seconds or minor thirds. Thus, the C pentatonic mode or scale (in “root position”) produced the following sequence:



There are four more variation (“inversion”) modes which also belong to the *C gong* system (they share C as the tonic note):

D *shang* mode: D-E-G-A-C

E jue mode: E-G-A-C-D

G zhi mode: G-A-C-D-E

A yu mode: A-C-D-E-G

Over the course of Chinese music history, it was common to omit a certain note in a pentatonic scale or add more notes to form hexatonic or heptatonic scales. Figure 1 shows the C *gong* mode, understood without the tonic.

1. Example of pentatonic in omit (*gong*) mode:

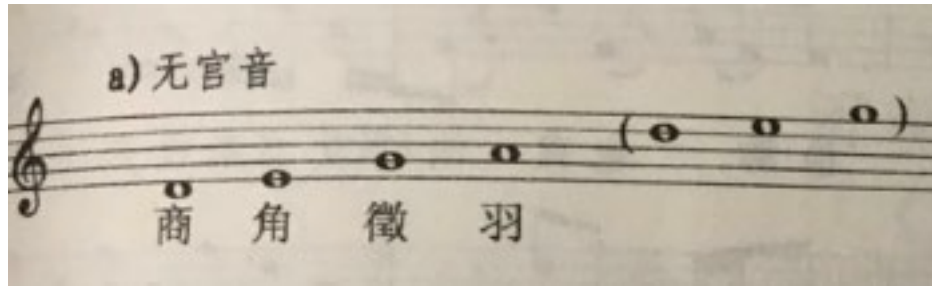


Figure 1. Pentatonic in omit (*gong*) mode¹⁷.

2. Added notes/tones in hexatonic and heptatonic scales are named as follows:

F: *qing jue* (清角) or *he* (和)

F#: *bian zhi* (变徵)

B: *bian gong* (变宫)

¹⁷ Zhongliang Tong, Chinese art education encyclopaedia: music volum (Shanghai, China: Shanghai music publishing house, 2001), 99

Bb: *run* (闰)

In the C gong mode the following tones can be added to form hexatonic and heptatonic scales: (1) F: *qing jue* (清角) or *he* (和); (2) F#: *bian zhi* (变徵); (3) B: *bian gong* (变宫); (4) Bb: *run* (闰).

Heptatonic scales can be also divided into three different modes:

1. *Qingyue* (清乐): Pentatonic+ (F and B)
2. *Yayue* (雅乐): Pentatonic+ (F# and B)
3. *Yanyue* (燕乐): Pentatonic+ (F and Bb)

Pentatonic Scales used in *Instants*

The great examples of pentatonic scales are using in the following ways:

The two main themes of *Instants* often appear simultaneously, whether fragmented or in their complete forms. (Example 3 and Example 4).



Example 3. Fragmented version of the two themes of *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*, m. 4.

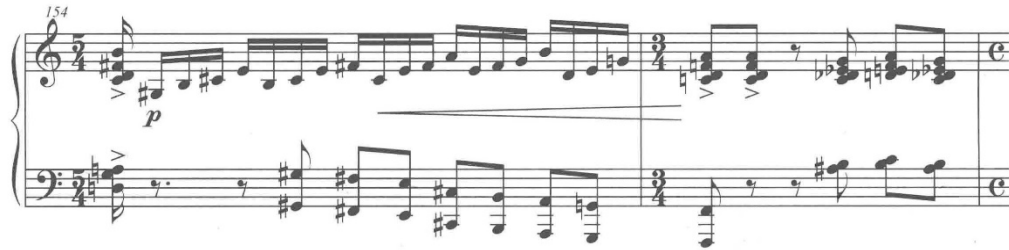
The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment. The first system, measures 9-11, is marked *pp* and *espress. flou*. It features a treble staff with a melodic line labeled 'I' and a bass staff with a corresponding line labeled 'II'. The second system, measures 11-13, is marked *poco movendo* and *mp*. It features a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a corresponding line. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Example 4. Complete themes of *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*, mm. 9-11.

Chen quoted the *xing xian* melody (B-A-G-E) from the Peking Opera as a primary motive. After the first three bars, the incomplete versions of themes I and II appear simultaneously in m. 4. (Example 3). The two themes appear in the complete form four bars later. (Example 4) Meanwhile, theme II, which is the retrograde of theme I, moves in contrary motion. However, theme II can be found as early as in the first measure. The

opening measure consists of four notes: C#-B-A-F#, which in retrograde produces: F#-A-B-C#, which is similar to the approaching theme II (Eb-Gb-Ab-Bb). Both themes I and II use the *yu* mode: which is E *yu* mode (G pentatonic scale) and E-flat *yu* mode (G-flat pentatonic), the semitone relationship takes shape between these two modes. In m. 9 (the complete two themes), a series of the perfect fifths move in parallel motion to create a sense of uncertainty and floating.

Chen not only placed pentatonic scales between chords, but also as patterns within fast running passages. For example, in m. 154, the rapid sixteenth notes in the right hand consist of four pentatonic collections: (D-E-F#-A-B), (E-F#-G #-B-C#), (G-A-B-D-E), (A-B-C#-E-F#). (Example 5).



Example 5. Qi-gang Chen, *Instantes d'un Opera de Pekin*, m.154.

As explained above, the Chinese pentatonic scale can be extended to hexatonic and heptatonic scales by adding the fourth and the seventh notes. In Example 4, two hexatonic scales in the right hand, the D-sharp in the soprano melodic line (m. 10) would be the added raised fourth note in B *shang* scale (A *gong* system), while G-sharp in the alto voice can be considered as the added raised fourth in E *shang* (D *gong* system). However, heptatonic scales appear in the left hand, with added raised fourth (G#) and seventh notes (C#) in D *gong* system (*Yayue* 雅乐) in the tenor voice while added fourth (G) and seventh notes (C#) in base line in the D *gong* system (*Qingyue* 清乐).

Another hexatonic example can be found in m. 157, an A *zhi* mode (D *gong* system) with C-sharp as an added raised seventh (Example 6). In m. 194, there is an F-sharp *zhi* mode (B *gong* system) with the added fourth (E) and raised seventh (A#) notes as heptatonic scale (*Yayue* 雅乐). (Example 7).



Example 6. Qi-gang Chen, *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*. mm.156-157.



Example 7. Qi-gang Chen, *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*. m.194.

Chapter 6 Thematic Development in *Instants*

The variations in *Instants* are based on two short themes that are presented simultaneously in their complete form in mm. 9-10. They are clearly referred to in the score as “I” and “II”. The subsequent seven variations and transitions develop these themes through a range of techniques, including fragmentation, extension, ornamentation, and transposition. *Instants*, unlike traditional variations, is not based on a prior melody, like a folk song, but is more of a “continuous variations” form as used in the early published works of Arnold Schoenberg. As in any work based on variation principles one perceives and delights in the interplay of what remains of the theme and what is changed, that is added or transformed. Since this essay is focused on issues that are helpful to performers and listeners, I do not attempt a thorough theoretical analysis, rather I present observations on representative techniques and passages. Understanding how Chen deploys these techniques is necessary to bring out the essence of the piece in performance.

In *Instants* the variations begin immediately after the statement of the two complete themes in m.9-10. In measure 11, Chen varies the themes in subtle and complex ways (Example 4). He presents them both in augmentation (eighth-notes becoming quarter-notes) and doing away with the bar line; then he juxtaposed themes I and II (with theme I becoming the bottom voice). In theme II the intervals are inverted, with perfect fifths becoming fourths (spelled enharmonically) and a pitch level a semitone lower. Furthermore, there are some minor changes in the intervallic relationships to enrich the harmony. For example, in the statement of theme II, the second and third quarter-notes are a major sixth and minor seventh respectively, while notes nine through twelve are sixths and sevenths.

Chen relies on techniques of both melodic extension and fragmentation [which Messiaen called, in French, *continuation* and *élimination*] to connect the Introduction to Variation I and Transition I (from m.19-m. 45). Extension begins on the last note of m. 19, while, fragmentation appears at the end of Variation I (m. 35).

Extension is a traditional way to develop melodic material in the theme and variation form by keeping some elements recognizably the same and varying others. In Variation I, for example, Chen more than doubles the tempo, moving at m. 19 from MM 63 to MM 152. He maintains the same rhythmic profile and exact intervallic relationships (Example 8). This technique is a dramatic shift from the slow and static sense of the introduction into the passionate forward movement that persists through following measures.

As Example 8 shows, Chen uses the same thematic idea from the complete theme I, but varies it through ascending chromatically a fifth in the left hand while applying ornaments in the right hand. In addition to the first note (upbeat) in each passage, other notes are exactly symmetrical from the central notes.

The soprano melody from complete Theme I (Sharp notes):

C#	B	A	F#	A	B	C#	D#	C#	B	A	F#	A	B
Upbeat						Central							
note													

Extension in right hand (Flat notes):

Bb	Ab	Gb	Eb	Gb	Ab	Bb	C	Bb	Ab	Gb	Eb	Gb	Ab
----	----	----	----	----	----	----	---	----	----	----	----	----	----

Upbeat

Central note

Extension in left hand and move an ascending chromatic pattern:

1. The first entrance:

D	C	Bb	G	Bb	C	D	E	D	C	Bb	G	Bb	C
---	---	----	---	----	---	---	---	---	---	----	---	----	---

Upbeat

Central

note

2. The second entrance:

D#	C#	B	G#	B	C#	D#	E#	D#	C#	B	G#	B	C#
----	----	---	----	---	----	----	----	----	----	---	----	---	----

Upbeat

Central

note

3. The third entrance;

E	D	C	A	C	D	E	F#	E	D	C	A	C	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	---	---	---	---	---	---

Upbeat

Central

note

4. The fourth entrance

F	Eb	Db	Bb	Db	Eb	F	G	F	Eb	Db	Bb	Db	Eb
---	----	----	----	----	----	---	---	---	----	----	----	----	----

Upbeat

Central

note

5.The fifth entrance:

F#	E	D	B	D	E	F#	G	F#	E	D	B	D	E
----	---	---	---	---	---	----	---	----	---	---	---	---	---

Upbeat

Central

note

6.The sixth entrance:

G	F	E ^b	C	E ^b	F	G	A	G	F	E ^b	C	E ^b	F
---	---	----------------	---	----------------	---	---	---	---	---	----------------	---	----------------	---

Upbeat

Central

note

7.The seventh entrance:

A	G	F	D	F	G	A	B	A	G	F	D	F	G
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Upbeat

Central

note

Chen starts the passage on D and ends on A in the left hand, which corresponds to the fifth relationship in the complete themes with parallel fifths.

17 *fendu* $\text{♩} = 152$ *p*

20 *p*

23 *p* *p*

26 *p* *p*

29 *p* *p*

32

Example 8. Qi-gang Chen, *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*, mm. 17-33.

Fragmentation

Melodic development through elimination was really created by Beethoven. He has left us some immortal models of it; let us recall only the central development of the first movement of the Fifth Symphony in C minor. This procedure is at the basis of all thematic life. It consists of repeating a fragment of the theme, taking away from it successively a part of its notes up to concentration upon itself, reduction to a schematic state, shrunken by strife, by crisis.¹⁸

Apparently, Chen favored the technique of fragmentation to develop his music, just as his teacher Messiaen did. For example, the fragments of Themes I and II presented in m. 4 are repeatedly used at the end of Variation I and Transition I. To compress the theme, Chen changes the time signature from 4/4 to 3/4 and then 2/4. Thus, in m. 43, the right hand has only two notes remaining from the previous measures that had consisted of an eight-note group (Example 9). The music of this section corresponds directly to the static gesture of the actors and the rapid dance steps in the Peking Opera. The left hand has the consistent ascending eighth-note pattern, while the fragmentation in the right hand corresponds to the quick dance steps.

¹⁸ Oliver Messiaen, *The Technique of My Musical Language*, Vol.1, p. 32.

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a piano accompaniment. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef.

- System 1 (Measures 34-35):** Measure 34 begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The melody is a continuous eighth-note pattern. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is present. Measure 35 shows a change in the bass line and a double bar line.
- System 2 (Measures 36-39):** Measure 36 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The melody continues with eighth notes. The bass line features a sequence of chords. A double bar line appears after measure 37.
- System 3 (Measures 40-43):** Measure 40 begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The melody continues with eighth notes. The bass line features a sequence of chords. A double bar line appears after measure 41.

Example 9. Qi-gang Chen, *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*, mm. 34-43.

Chapter 7 Quartal/Quintal Harmony and Set Theory

Messiaen's (as well as Debussy's) influence in Chen's *Instantes* is obvious, particularly in the harmonic vocabulary and his sensitivity to sonority, that include long washes of sustained harmonies as well as the use of planing, that is, chordal structures moving in parallel motion. Parallel motion in intervals of the fourth and fifth serve essential roles in traditional Chinese music as well and are easily associated with Asian music. Because most of Chinese instruments are tuned to the perfect intervals of the fourth and fifth, just as the *pipa* is tuned to A-D-E-A and *jinghu* is tuned to G-D, C-G, or A-E. Therefore, fourth and fifth intervals are prevalent and appear in different guises as the piece develops, such as in mm. 9-11(Example 4), 63-67 (Example 10) and event at the last page of the piece (Example 2).

The image displays a musical score for two systems, measures 63-67. The first system (measures 63-65) is in 2/4 time and features a complex harmonic texture with parallel motion in fourths and fifths. The second system (measures 66-67) continues this texture, with a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) in measure 67. The score is written for piano, with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a key signature of one flat (B-flat).

Example 10. Qi-gang Chen, *Instantes d'un Opera de Pekin*, mm. 63-67.

The first occurrence of a quartal or quintal chord in *Instances* is found in the left hand in m. 102 (G-A-C-D), where the meter changes to duple. In m. 109, while Theme I is decorated with sixteenth notes in the right hand, the quartal chord serves as accompaniment or harmonic support for Theme I that lasts for several measures (Example 11). Thus, the quartal and quintal chords create a sense of tension by emulating the Chinese drum.

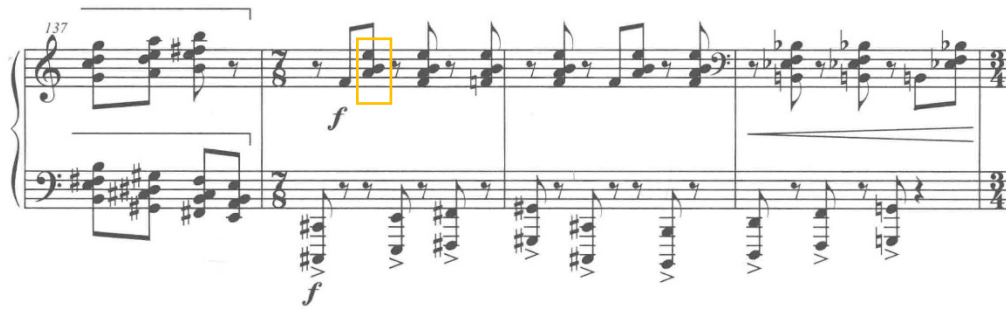
The image displays three systems of musical notation from Example 11. The first system, starting at measure 101, shows a piano piece with a treble and bass staff. The bass staff contains a quartal chord (G-A-C-D) in measure 102, which is highlighted with a yellow box. The second system, starting at measure 105, continues the piece. The third system, starting at measure 109, shows a melodic line in the treble staff and a quartal chord in the bass staff. The tempo/mood is marked 'nervoso ma preciso' and the dynamics are 'mf' and 'pp'.

Example 11. Qi-gang Chen, *Instances d'un Opera de Pekin*, mm. 101-110.

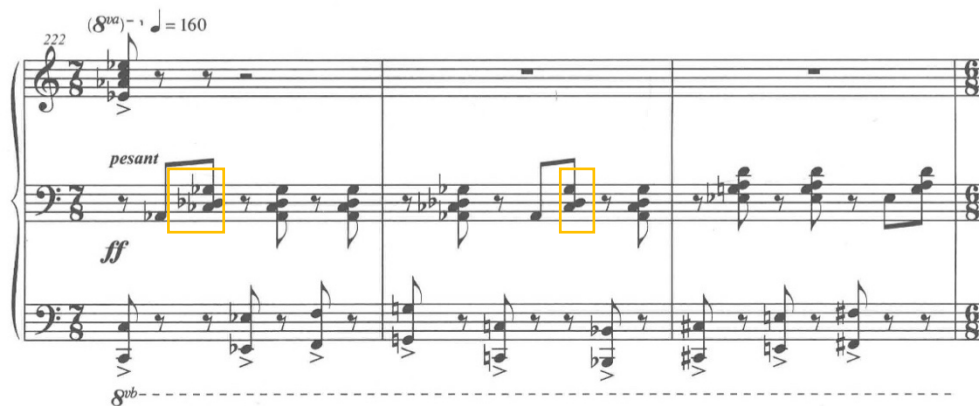
To enhance the effect of the music, instead of placing all notes in close alignment, Chen often places the major second as an inner voice within the quartal or quintal chords to emphasize the importance of major second based on the Chinese pentatonic scales and create an especially Chinese-sounding sonority.

In terms of mixing cultural elements from both East and West, Qigang Chen combines the quartal/quintal chords and the pentatonic scale with asymmetrical meter (7/8).

In mm. 138-139, the composer not only changes the meter, tempo, and rhythmic content, but also uses the quartal chord producing a dissonant harmony while the second theme in B *zhi* mode (E *gong* system) appears in the left hand (Example 12). In fact, the traditional order of this (quartal/quintal) chord should be A-B-E-F, but instead he chose to arrange the major second in the middle of the chord as F-A-B-E, giving it an expansive sense thickening the texture, which creates a new harmonic sonority while still imitating the upper part of the pipa chord. One other excellent example comes from mm. 222-223, which has the second theme in the left-hand plays B-flat *zhi* pentatonic (E-flat *gong* system) (Example 13).



Example 12. Qi-gang Chen, *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*, mm. 137-139.



Example 13. Qi-gang Chen, *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*, mm. 222-223.

Pipa chord

One of the most significant accompanying instruments in the Peking Opera is the Chinese lute or *pipa*. “In the 1920s and 1930s some musicians rearranged the frets of the *pipa* based on the 12-tone equal temperament, making a 24-fret *pipa*. Since the 1950s this kind of *pipa* has become popular, and the number of the frets increased to 29 or 30, with a range from A to d''' or e'''.”¹⁹ There are twelve methods for tunings²⁰, but the most common is A-D-E-A, with A-B-E-A being the next most common. The same chord pattern as the three successive fourths of this *pipa* tuning can be heard constantly in the beginning of the *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*. Example 3 (Chapter Five) shows an excerpt from this work, in which both themes illustrate a *pipa*-sounding pattern of a fourth, a second, and a fourth.

The numerous *pipa* chords (right hand) with parallel fifths (left hand) combine with mixed meters to create a stormy percussive effect. Passages like those in Variation III, mm. 85–93, provide a fitting example (Example 14). Furthermore, Chen places a series of *pipa* chords in the most climactic passages, a richer harmonization based on heavily dissonance sonority heightens the climactic sound and places it more in the character of Chinese music, but also with Debussy's musical language. For example, in Debussy's *La Cathédrale Engloutie*, he frequently uses planning and pedal point (Example 15), as well as the rich lower notes of piano to create a colorful atmosphere (Example 17), just as Chen does in *Instants*. (Example 16 and Example 18). He evokes a splendid feeling by means of the *pipa*

¹⁹ Tsun-Yuen Lui, and Wu Ben. “The Chinese ‘pipa’.” Oxford Music Online. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.uky.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.45149>. (Accessed June 9, 2018).

²⁰ Tang, Ying. 2015. Comparison of solo music for the western lute and chinese *pipa*. Ph.D. diss., University of Kansas, <http://ezproxy.uky.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.uky.edu/docview/1716331806?accountid=11836> (accessed November 25, 2018).

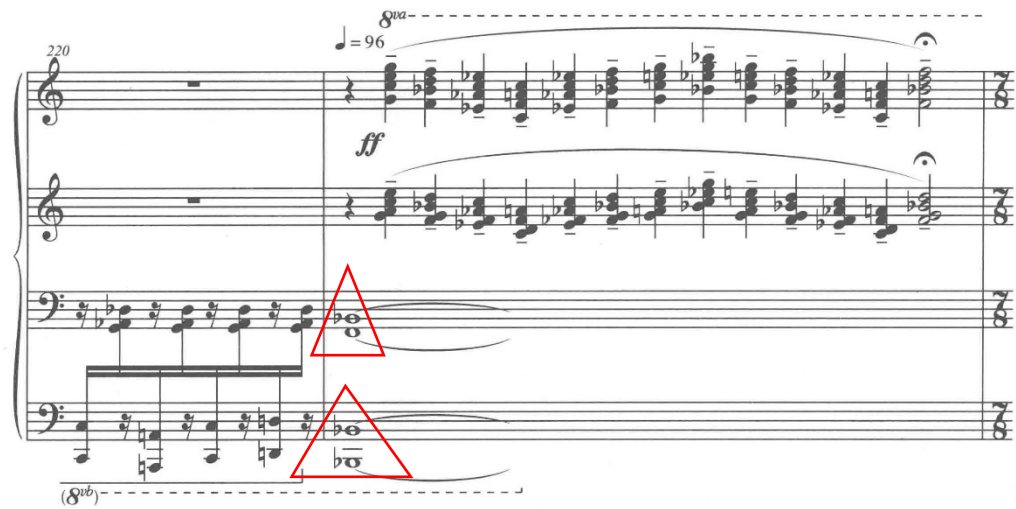
chord (blue rectangle) along with undulating chords in the lower register (red oval)
(Example 18).



Example 14. Qi-gang Chen, *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*, mm. 86-93.



Example 15. Planing of Debussy's *La Cathédrale Engloutie*.



Example 16. Qi-gang Chen, *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*, mm. 221.



Example 17. Debussy's *La Cathédrale Engloutie*.



Example 18. Qi-gang Chen, *Instantes d'un Opera de Pekin*, mm. 228-230.

Set Theory

Harmonic analysis used for music structured through major-minor tonality is of little use in analyzing post-tonal music of the 20th and 21st centuries. New analytical tools and techniques have been developed to discover organizing principles and structural coherence in atonal and post-tonal music. Among these new approaches, set theory seems the most appropriate approach to unlocking the secrets of *Instantes*.

Musical set theory provides concepts for categorizing musical objects and describing their relationships. Many of the notions were first elaborated by Howard Hanson (1960) in connection with tonal music, and then mostly developed in connection with

atonal music by theorists such as Allen Forte (1973), drawing on the work in twelve-tone theory of Milton Babbitt²¹.

In the set theory, the normal order represents an ordering of actual, specific pitch classes. We will use it when we need to compare particular collections of literal pitch classes for operations such as transposition, inversion, and some other literal operations. The prime form, on the other hand, is an abstract label that represents a set classes. That is, it represents all the different sets (all the transpositionally and inversionally equivalent normal orders) that make up a set class. We will use the prime form when we want to refer to the set class as a whole, to a set as a representative of a set class, or for some operations that deal with abstract, as opposed to literal, representations of sets²².

Since (027) occurs a lot in *Instants*, some portions from the introduction are clear examples to demonstrate. Beginning in measure 4. On the one hand, the first four notes of the two themes are based on “pipa chords”. On the other hand, many Tn (transpositional equivalence) and TnI (inversion equivalence) relationships are hidden between Theme I and Theme II. The following table shows the vertical relationships:

²¹ “Set Theory (music).” Wikipedia. January 25, 2018. Accessed October 15, 2018. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Set_theory_\(music\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Set_theory_(music)).

²² Miguel A. Roig-Francolí, *Understanding Post-Tonal Music* (Nueva York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2008), 86.

Table 2.

Set thorey Theme I (right hand)

Chords	Normal Order	Prime Form
Chord 1: B(low)-E-F#-B(high)	[4,6,11]	(027)
Chord 2: A(low)-D-E-A(high)	[2,4,9]	(027)
Chord 3: G(low)-A-D-G(high)	[7,9,2]	(027)
Chord 4: E(low)-A-B-E(high)	[9,11,4]	(027)

Chord 1 & Chord 2: T2	Chord 1 & Chord 3: T3	Chord 1 & Chord 4: T5
Chord 2 & Chord 3: T5	Chord 2 & Chord 4: T7	
Chord 3 & Chord 4: T2		

Set thorey Theme II (left hand)

Chords	Normal Order	Prime Form
Chord 1: E(low)-b-Ab-Bb-Eb(high)	[8,10,3]	(027)
Chord 2: Gb(low)-Cb-Db-Gb(high)	[11,1,6]	(027)
Chord 3: Ab(low)-Db-Eb-Ab(high)	[1,3,8]	(027)
Chord 4: Bb(low)-Eb-F-Bb(high)	[10,3,5]	(027)

Chord 1 & Chord 2: T3	Chord 1 & Chord 3: T5	Chord 1 & Chord 4: T1I
Chord 2 & Chord 3: T2	Chord 2 & Chord 4: T4I	
Chord 3 & Chord 4: T6I		

As the overall structure of two fragment themes, the intricate displacement formed by Tn and TnI assure thematic connection and coherence. They also move in parallel motion, creating, with suspended sonorities, the sensation of highly resonant bells, whereas,

Theme I is transposed six times before Variation I starts. Like Schoenberg's *First String Quartet* (1905), the melodic material generates the vertical sonorities. For instance, the following example (Example 19) comes from mm. 7-8, the descending motion clearly shows that T4-related, just repeats the same melodic gesture in transposition. The four-note in soprano line: (E-D-C-A) (G#-F#-E-C#) (Ab-Gb-Eb- with the first note Bb omitted) corresponds similarly to Theme I (B-A-G-E) while the third and fourth layers are tightly associated with the first and second.

The image shows a musical score for four staves, likely representing different instruments or voices. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'rit.' and 'pp'. Blue arrows are drawn across the staves, indicating transpositional relationships between specific notes. For example, an arrow points from a note in the first staff to a note in the second staff, and another arrow points from a note in the third staff to a note in the fourth staff. The score is written in a complex, atonal style with many sharps and flats.

Example 19. Qi-gang Chen, *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*, mm. 7-8.

Chapter 8 Performance Considerations

To perform *Instant's* successfully requires a highly developed virtuosic technique. The technique challenges include rapid and clean sixteenth-notes passages alternating between white and black keys, complex and extended chords, percussive passages with irregular rhythms and octaves leaps in both hands. Meeting all of these technical challenges is essential in order to convey the expressive power of the piece. Yet even before starting to practice the work, the pianist must first become familiar with, and develop an understanding of, the Peking Opera itself. I recommend listening to and viewing performances to see the various styles involved, especially those associated with the four main character types in the Opera (*Sheng, Dan, Jing, Chou*)²³. These characters form the essence of the dramatic work and offer insight into how these characters relate to the piano work, although the characters do not have direct representation in *Instant's*. However, the two main sections of the Opera—the peaceful scenes, or *Wenchang* (accompanying with string instruments), and the battle scene, or *Wuchang* (the percussion parts)—correspond directly to the slow introduction and the variations in rapid tempos. In addition, the upbeats are emphasized in *Instant's* to emulate the rhythmic character of the Opera, and furthermore, the motive of two sixteenth notes followed by an eighth note (the second sixteenth note ascending by a major second and returning to the original pitch for the eighth note) is an

²³ Sheng: a principal male role in Peking Opera.
Dan: any female role.
Jing: a male role plays either primary or secondary.
Chou: a male clown, playing secondary role.

aspect of *Jinghu*'s style. Its tone is strident, with an energetic bowing style. In the Peking Opera the jinghu-player doubles the vocal melody²⁴.

Performers should be aware of some terms in the score, such as the *Luminoso* (radiating light) is likely to approach Messiaen's musical language, the sound-colors in Messiaen's work is more than everything, such as the form, timbres and rhythms. "Messiaen claimed that he saw color when writing or listening to music, and in some compositions, he associated chords or sonorities to particular colors."²⁵ Messiaen never provided pitch-color scheme as Scriabin did, but he described them based on the Pitch Class and refer to the position of scattered colors within his synaesthetic field of perception.

In beginning to practice *Instants*, one should pay particular attention to the passages that pose special problems. For example, the passage shown in Example 20, where complex chords alternate register in rapid succession amid irregular rhythm and constant change of meter. Furthermore, the strongly percussive nature of this section requires the performer to project a formidably powerful sound. Practicing such passages requires a technique that is called "pulling" or "gripping", where the pianist abruptly squeezes each chord and then releases it instantly. This technique allows the performer to project the music with commanding force.

²⁴ Guy, Nancy. "Beijing Opera." Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online. Accessed November 1, 2018. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.uky.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.51764>

²⁵ Miguel A. Roig-Francolí, *Understanding Post-tonal Music* (Nueva York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2008), 256.



Example 20. Qi-gang Chen, *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*, mm. 88-93.

To develop accuracy from chord to chord, one should mentally and physically make the shift from the fifth finger on high G to the thumb on the higher E-flat. Thus, instead of making the octave jump of a minor sixth, focus only on an interval of a minor third makes the passage more manageable and will improve the efficiency of practicing.

Finding proper fingering in learning the piece provides an additional challenge. Chen seems to have written *Instants* with the practicalities of performance only secondary to the essence of his musical ideas. In fact, there are passages that cannot be played through conventional fingering. The fingering of rapid sixteenth notes alternating quickly between white keys and black keys is a daunting challenge in the piece. Representative examples can be found in the left hand in Example 21 (see m. 61).



Example 21. Qi-gang Chen, *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*, mm. 59-62.

In the above excerpt, a suitable fingering for these eight notes in the left hand could be considered as 2123 2321, which allows the fingers to remain flexible in order to produce a more fluid sound. The first note of each sixteenth-note group of four notes is important, projecting the main theme in the left hand, thus C-G-C-F-C-G-C.

“In reading music, the pianist should not read single notes but should unite these notes in comprehensible successions: arpeggio or scale pattern of any kind, any kind of sequence, harmonic complex, and the like. In order to be able to play with speed, we have to organize our thinking in such a way that it will flow rapidly and unhampered”²⁶. Walter Gieseke used to say that the main factor in technique is the brain, so one-pointed mental focus, as well as physical discipline, plays an important role in both practice and performance. Example 21 can serve as the simplest example of mental regrouping—the left-hand glides easily in a series of four descending notes starting from D and ending on G in m. 59, in which the notes move in one direction and the last note of a group has the advantage of ending on an accent, which is like the pattern of question and answer or antecedent and consequent. Moreover, for the grouping it is easier to end on a white key rather than on black key (B-flat).

²⁶ George Kochevitsky, *The Art of Piano Playing: A Scientific Approach* (Princeton, NJ: Summy-Birchard Music, 1967), 45.

The splendid Variation 4 may have been inspired by Chen's own ballet *Raise the Red Lantern* (2000) in act III, which was written at the same time as *Instants*. Performers should listen to the ballet version first in order to hear the correspondences. Example 22 is an excerpt from Variation 4 that contains part of the shared melody with the ballet. The particular passage in the right hand in measures 119 to 120 should be played evenly and with brilliance. During practice, to go beyond mere technical mastery, disconnecting each note while playing at a slow tempo will allow the pianist to listen more carefully and project the lyricism inherent in the melodic lines. In this process of practicing, the performer should not lessen the level of exertion in order to maintain a consistent level of firm engagement in the hands and fingers, as well as a relaxed concentration in body and mind, in order to convey the appropriate level of energy.



Example 22. Qi-gang Chen, *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin*, mm. 119-120.

Different types of touch are also necessary in performing the introduction and the final passages of the piece. The octave displacement (Example 1 and Example 4) requires performers to express the subtle relationship between the seemingly disparate notes. To convey the deeper musical meaning requires above all very careful listening and a sensitivity to how the sound decays. This understanding helps the pianist form coherent and lyrical melodic patterns out of the disjunct notes, but this can only happen when the

performer physically senses the connection between one note and the next with firm control of the fingers.

Chapter 9 Conclusion

Throughout Qigang Chen's career, he has been an innovator within a lineage of Western composers, particularly the French. His early musical interests were shaped by traditional Chinese culture, but his formative years in France under the tutelage of Olivier Messiaen enabled him to integrate Chinese and Western idioms into an intensely personal art. Messiaen had a particularly lasting influence on Chen's compositional development. His *Instants d'un Opera de Peking* shows clear evidence of assimilating and mastering compositional techniques from both cultures. Pentatonic scales and melodies are spread throughout the piece, along with thematic transformation, motivic fragmentation and extension, rhythmic diversity, octave displacement, and other devices. Chen also demonstrates how the tuning of *pipa* strings provided a means of expressing a recognizable Chinese sonority, which he melded into the overall tonal structure. Likewise, when listening to this music, the listener is invited to relish a unique musical sensation promoted by themes that include pitch-class analysis. In addition, Chen's belief in the power and communicative nature of *xing xian* is indisputable; this small element captures the momentary impressions of Peking Opera in accordance with the programmatic title of the piece.

His contribution has the potential to create public awareness of the importance and viability of both traditional and contemporary Chinese music, while his most consuming and inimitable musical passions transcend his compositions.

Part II Program Notes

Program I

April 8, 2014

Singletary Center Recital Hall

8:00 P.M.

After Hours

Pam Wedgwood
(1947-)

Just Another Day

Shop-A-Holic!

Aubade, Concerto for Piano and 18 Instruments

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

With Wei-Sian Tiny Chen, piano

INTERMISSION

Star Wars

John Williams
(1932-)

Cantina Band

Jazz Suite

Kevin Olson
(1971-)

A Swing Thing

A Little Latin

Ballad for Julia

Blue Waltz

Tango

Dianne Rahbee
(1938-)

Blue

Mike Cornick
(1947-)

Late Night Call

Out of Blue

Piano Dance

Tea for Two

Vincent Youmans
(1898-1946)

Program Notes

Pam Wedgwood is a British composer and pianist. She has composed many works, focusing especially on pedagogical music. *After Hours* is a series of jazzy duets containing a variety of styles, from upbeat tunes to smooth jazz and wistful blues.

Francis Poulenc was a master of compositional balance, toeing the line between levity and depth, clarity and richness. *Aubade* was originally conceived as ballet music for the dancer Bronislava Nijinska. It is associated with the story of Diana, Roman goddess of the hunt and of chastity. The action of the ballet depicts her anguished struggle with her fate-decreed bonds of abstinence. During the middle ages, aubades were common repertoire of troubadours. They were songs or poems concerning daybreak, particularly the separation of lovers at dawn.

John Williams was born in 1932 in Long Island, New York, and later moved with his family to Los Angeles in 1948. He studied composition with Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco at UCLA. After serving in the Air Force, Williams returned to New York to study piano at the Juilliard School of Music. He worked as a jazz pianist for a time before moving back to Los Angeles to begin his career in the film studios. In 1977, he composed the music for *Star Wars*, which became the best-selling score-only soundtrack of all time and won him an Oscar.

Kevin Olson is a pianist, composer, and member of the piano faculty at Utah State University. His *Jazz Suite* contains four elaborate pieces. *A Swing Thing* has an upbeat tempo, swinging eighths, walking bass, triplets, and syncopation. *A Little Latin* is a more relaxed in style, with syncopation, accents, and samba rhythms. Ballad for *Julia* slows to a

romantic mood. The final piece of the suite, *Blue Waltz*, is in a spunky, lively style with syncopation and chromaticism.

“Picture you upon my knee. Just tea for two. And two for tea. Just me for you. And you for me alone...” Tea for Two was introduced by Louise Groody and John Barker in the Broadway musical, *No, No, Nanette*, which opened on September 16, 1925, at the Globe Theater. The song, however, was known to the public well before its official introduction. The composer of the show’s score was Vincent Youmans, with lyrics by Irving Caesar and Otto Harbach. Later, composer J. Louis Merkar arranged this melody for piano duet.

Program II
April 26, 2017
Singletary Center Recital Hall
6:00 P.M.
Assisted by Wei-Sian Tiny Chen and Zixi Ren, piano

Le Tic-Toc-Choc ou Les Maillotins François Couperin
(1668-1733)

Sonatas K.455 and K.119 Domenico Scarlatti
(1685-1757)

Toccata Pierre Sancan
(1916-2008)

Harvest Festival (2002) Yann-Jong Hwang
(1955-)

INTERMISSION

Musica ricercata György Sándor Ligeti
(1923-2006)

Nos. III, IV, and X

Piano Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

I. *Allegro ma non trappo*

II. *Larghetto*

III. *Allegro molto*

Program Notes

Couperin was a French Baroque composer, organist and harpsichordist. He published four harpsichord collections. He also wrote the famous *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord* (1717). Couperin's aim is to "see the music", he translated what he saw in nature to music rather than personal expression. *Le Tic-Toc-Choc ou Les Maillotins*, a piece from his *Dixhuitième Ordre* was published in 1722. The version that I played was first published about 1888 from the Augener edition and edited by Johannes Brahms and Friedrich Chrysander.

One of the best-known pieces in the harpsichord repertoire, *Le Tic-Toc-Choc* expresses the pendulum of a clock, a light beating sound. The lightness of touch makes great demands on the modern pianist. Many techniques when interpreted to modern piano are much harder than on the harpsichord. For example, the piece was written for two-manual harpsichord originally, but when played on the piano, hands are always overlapping, resulting in an increase in the difficulty of playing, especially to project the clear and crisp quality of the articulation.

Domenico Scarlatti was an Italian Composer composer of the Baroque Era. Scarlatti wrote over 550 Keyboard sonatas; these sonatas, more than half of which were composed when Scarlatti was between the ages of sixty-seven and seventy-two, were collected toward the end of his life in a series of volumes.²⁷ he invented many keyboard techniques including large leaps, hand crossings double stops, and dissonant harmonies in

²⁷ Maurice Hinson and Wesley Roberts, *Guide to the Pianist's Repertoire: the fourth edition* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana Universities Press, 2014), 853.

his music. Scarlatti lived and worked for many years in Spain, and many of his sonatas are influenced by traditional Spanish music and dance. For example, he used the “crush” to give an impression of strumming on the guitar and used lots of repeat notes in order to imitate the Spanish guitar effect. Another characteristic element in the Spanish dance is syncopation and bolero rhythm, which presented the rhythmic energy in his music. Additionally, rapid scales, cadenza-like passages, and surprise modulations appear often in his music. Scarlatti liked to use a tonic-dominant-tonic key pattern, a design that, along with the galant style of the melodies, approached the classical style.

Pierre Sancan was born in Mazamet, France. During his time, he was nationally renowned as a composer and pianist. His style is regarded as a bridge between mid-twentieth-century and the modern era. He is best known for *Sonatine* for flute and piano, and *Trois impressions*, a symphony for strings. The form of this toccata is akin to ABA, which combines tonal and atonal harmonies, glissandi, chromatic scales, and octaves.

György Ligeti is widely regarded as among the most influential composers of the late twentieth century. Much of his music, particularly during the 1960s and 70s, is highly experimental. Later in life, he developed a passion for polyrhythm, evident above all in his virtuosic etudes for piano.

Musica ricercata is a solo piano work composed between 1951 and 1953. It contains eleven pieces, some of the movements later arranged for wind quintet. Each movement explores progressively more pitch classes. For instance, the first movement uses only two pitch classes, the second uses three, and the last movement contains all twelve pitches. Ligeti developed the pieces by using the dimensions of rhythm and timbre, polyrhythm, dynamic and register shifts, bitonality, polychords, trichords, and tone clusters.

However, he also includes Baroque elements such as counterpoint and ostinato. In fact, *Musica ricercata* is a way to express Ligeti's own compositional style called "out of nothing" as "sought music".

Yann-Jong Hwang is a contemporary Taiwanese composer, born in 1955 in the city of Chia-Yi. He currently teaches theory and composition in the Music Department at Tainan University of Technology in Taiwan. In 2004, Hwang produced a CD entitled *A Collection of Contemporary Daoist and Buddhist Chants in Taiwanese*, which won Best Religious Music Album in the Traditional Music Category at the Golden Melody Awards for 2007. This yearly award is given by the Taiwanese Ministry of Culture. In 2008, Dr. Nam Yeung and Dr. Tina Shao (colleagues of Professor Hwang) released a CD entitled *A Musical Harvest Festival*, which included *Harvest Festival* for piano four hands. The work earned Professor Hwang his second honor from the Golden Melody Awards: Best Composer Award in the category of Traditional Music for 2008. Professor Hwang has written many outstanding compositions in a wide range of genres, including *Fantasy* for solo piano (1988); the cantata *Eulogize* (1987); *Nostalgia* for chorus (1994); and *Harvest Festival* for piano four hands (2002), among others.²⁸

Harvest Festival for piano four hands was commissioned by the Taiwanese Yeung-Shao Piano Duo and was composed between May and September 2002. The inspiration for the piece arose from a childhood memory. When Professor Hwang was a child, the radio

²⁸ Chen, Wei-Sian. 2017. "Harvest festival" by yann-jong hwang: A piano duet inspired by taiwanese folk tunes. Ph.D. diss., University of Kentucky, <http://ezproxy.uky.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.uky.edu/docview/1922586873?accountid=11836> (accessed December 11, 2018).

station often played two famous Harvest Festival tunes from the collection *Dancing in the Moonlight*, “*Na Lu Wan*” and “*Hen Na Yo In*”. At that time Professor Hwang did not know the titles of the tunes or which aboriginal tribe they were from. The only thing he remembered were the melodies. These melodies “stuck” in his head until, many years later, he found out the official names of the tunes.

Harvest Festival features the two Amis folk tunes, developed through a wide range of Western musical techniques. The piece is in four sections: *Allegro vivo* (“*Moonlight Overture*”), *Allegro con brio* (“*Drunken Drum Dance*”), *Andante* (“*Ritual Ceremony to Ancestors*”), and *Presto vivace* (“*Joyful Whistling People*”). These four sections were originally untitled, but were later given names by Ging-Cai Lin, an ethnomusicologist and colleague of Professor Hwang, after he listened to the composition for the first time. The harmonic language is highly dissonant and, although it employs pitch centers, it establishes those centers more by repetition and assertion than by traditional harmonic functions. The meter changes constantly in both parts, as is typical of Professor Hwang’s compositional style, creating a dynamic sense of forward movement.

Francis Poulenc was a French pianist and composer. Encouraged by his mother, he began his musical training at age five, and debuted his first composition, *Rapsodie nègre*, in Paris when he was eighteen years old. He established a reputation with the piano suite *Trois mouvements perpétuels*, the *Gloria* for soprano, choir and orchestra, and the *Concert champêtre* for harpsichord and orchestra.

The *Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra in D minor* was composed in 1932, and dedicated to Winnaretta Singer, Princess Edmond de Polignac. The concerto is in three movements: *Allegro ma non troppo in D minor*, *Larghetto in B-flat major* and *Allegro*

molto in D minor. The concerto is simple ABA form in the first and second movements, but the finale is more akin to rondo form.

Some sections are reminiscent of the work of Mozart, for example, the opening of the second movement, inspired by Mozart's *C Major Piano Concerto*, K 467, includes a clear melodic line and transparent texture, symmetrical phrasing, and a kind of question-and-answer dialogue. Performers need to be attentive to the expressiveness of the slow movement.

Program III
April 25, 2016
Singletary Center Recital Hall
6:00 P.M.

Piano Sonata No.52 in E-flat major Hob. XVI/52

Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)

Allegro

Adagio

Finale: Presto

Dumka in C minor, Op.59

Pyotr Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

INTERMISSION

Piano sonata in B flat major, Op. 24 No.2

Muzio Clementi
(1752-1832)

Allegro con Brio

Andante Quasi Allegretto

Rondo: Allegro Assai

Toccata: Prestissimo

Piano Sonata in E-flat major, Op.31 No.3

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Allegro

Scherzo: Allegretto Vivace

Menuetto: Moderato Grazioso-Trio

Presto con Fuoco

Nocturne No. 20 in C-sharp minor, Op. Posth.

Frédéric Chopin
(1810-1849)

Danzas Argentinas, Op.2

Alberto Ginastera

(1916-1983)

Danza del viejo boyero

Danza de la moza donosa

Danza del gaucho matrero

Hungarian Rhapsody No 11. In A minor

Franz Liszt

(1811-1886)

Program Notes

Haydn was an Austrian composer who born in Rohrau. At seven, he went to Vienna to be a choirboy, where he showed a natural talent of music in his early study. In 1762 he was hired by Prince Paul Anton Esterhazy of Hungary and remained there until 1790. His duties included composing whatever music the prince demanded, conducting performances, training musicians, and keeping the instruments in good repair. In his later life, Haydn went to Vienna briefly and visited London twice in 1791-1792, and in 1794-1795, for which he composed symphonies for two series of concerts in London. He was the last eminent composer to live satisfactorily under the patronage system.

Haydn is a highly original and facile composer who writes in various style-at times profound, at times humorous according to his wonderful sense of humor. Haydn was influenced by Croatian folk melodies and he also imitated French clarity and elegance. His melodies are often simple, tuneful and diatonic; the harmonies are full of surprising and daring effects, he favored Neapolitan and augmented sixth Chords. Additionally, he fashioned his texture between homophonic and polyphonic writing and clever uses of unexpected rests.

Haydn experimented a good deal with the symphonies, chamber music (including 21 string trios, 126 baryton trios, 31 piano trios) and piano sonatas. Haydn was not a pianist, but he wrote more than fifty piano sonatas. His sonatas adhere to three movement structure, but in addition he composed two sonatas with four movements and nine sonatas with only two movements.

One of his last piano sonata is the *No.52 in E-flat Major*. The first movement starts with a rolled chord in E-flat major. A lighter second theme begins B-flat major, and

imaginative modulations appear in the development such as C major, A-flat major and E major. The second movement is ABA form. The opening rhythm dominates the entire movement, as well as the abundant ornamentation. The finale movement is a rondo form with virtuosity, borrowing elements from both previous movements. In the central section, a passage recalls the first movement.

There are two commonly used system for numbering Haydn's sonatas. In 1957, Anthony van Hoboken catalogued Haydn's sonata giving H. numbers. In 1963, Christa Landon presented another chronology of the sonatas using L. numbers.²⁹

Muzio Filippo Vincenzo Francesco Saverio Clementi was an Italian composer, pianist, conductor, music editor, publisher, and teacher. Clementi wrote over one hundred keyboard sonatas over the course of fifty years. His early sonatas are in the galant style, while the later sonatas that might be compared to the later Beethoven and early romantic period. The characteristics of his style are virtuosity, doubled thirds and sixths, octave passages, and the use strong contrast dynamic.

Op.24 No. 2 demonstrates harmonic audacity, technical maturity. Mozart is said to have quoted the opening motif in *The Magic Flute*. In this sonata, the left hand is no longer merely accompanying, but provides the melody and long expressive phrases.

Tchaikovsky is considered one of the most important and original composers of the late Romantic period. He wrote a large quantity of piano music, and also contributed to orchestra and ballet music.

²⁹ Stewart Gordon, *A History of Keyboard Literature: Music for the Piano and Its Forerunners* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1996), 94-95.

The Dumka, Scene rustique russe was composed in 1886. The opening an *Andantino* was inspired by Russian folk song reminiscence of the nostalgia and middle section goes to wild dancing, celebration of the pleasures in life, followed by a bravura cadenza passage, and back to a melancholy tune of indescribable sadness.

Frédéric Chopin was a Polish composer and pianist. He began his musical education in Warsaw before leaving Poland at the age of 20. Beginning in 1829, he performed in Austria and Bohemia, where he developed his reputation until ultimately making Paris his musical home.

Most sources of Chopin's melodies can be traced back to Italian song due to his fondness of opera, especially the bel canto style from Bellini. Another significant aspect of Chopin's musical language is his use of chromaticism, which he uses as a device to develop thematic material or to embellish and ornament melodic lines. His Nocturns are like musical readings of nineteenth-century French poetry, recalling Alfred de Musset's line, "The most beautiful songs are the saddest songs."³⁰

No. 20 in C-sharp minor was dedicated to his old sister, which was composed in 1830 and published in 1870. The main theme appears in m.5 after a short introduction. In mm 21-22, the main theme from the third movement of his F minor concerto is employed. The structure is composed in ternary form. In m.33, the meter changes from 4/4 to 3/4 as the musical sentiment grows more emotionally lavish than the meditative spirit of the previous section. The closing section returns to the calm spirit of the opening by restating its thematic material but is varied with the addition of embellishments.

Argentinian born composer Alberto Ginastera began his musical education at Williams Conservatory in Buenos Aires. He later spent time studying and living in the US, where he studied with Aaron Copland, and eventually moved to Europe. Ginastera assigned

³⁰ John Gillespie, *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music; An historical survey of music for harpsichord and piano* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1965), 226.

names to each of his musical periods including: "Objective Nationalism" (1934–1948), "Subjective Nationalism" (1948–1958), and "Neo-Expressionism" (1958–1983). Throughout these periods, he integrated Argentine folk tunes with twentieth-century musical techniques. In addition, many of Ginastera's works were influenced by the Argentinian folkloric tradition including inspiration from the national symbol of the Gaucho, which were reputed to be brave and skilled horsemen.³¹

Danzas argentinas, Op. 2 was written for solo piano in 1973 and is composed as a set of three dances: *Danza del Viejo boyero*, *Danza de la moza donosa*, and *Danza del gaucho matrero*. In the first movement, the left-hand plays notes only on the black keys of the piano while the right plays only white keys. This results in an instance of bitonality in which the right hand is in C major key while the left-hand plays D-flat major. The second movement is a lyric and suave dance in 6/8 time in which the harmonic content is predominantly comprised of fourths and fifths. Richer harmonization appears in the middle section, and the movement is concluded with a return to the intervallic content of the opening, but in this case is supplemented with atonal chords. The virtuosic final movement, which is composed using the 12-tone technique, and is characterized by the use of the minor second and glissandi. The chromatic passages serve an important role in the final movement as they are frequently and rapidly transferred between the two hands.

The music of Ludwig van Beethoven is commonly broken up into three periods: 1794-1802, 1803-1812 and 1813-1827. His early works include 20 piano sonatas, 4 piano trios, 3 piano concertos, 2 cello and piano sonatas. During this period, his music draws

³¹ Antonio Vivaldi (Composer) - Short Biography. Accessed December 12, 2018. <http://www.bach-cantatas.com/Lib/Ginastera-Alberto.htm>.

heavily from the Viennese style, following to a large extent the models of Haydn and Mozart in compositional types and techniques. In Beethoven's middle period, his compositions often included an enlarged development section and coda, such as op.59 no.1; which uses more dissonances and irregular resolutions. Op. 59 also uses median key relationship in place of the traditional use of the dominant in second theme. Many outstanding pieces come from his late period, such as last string quartets op.131, the late piano sonatas opp.101,106,110,111, and his 9th Symphony. In his late period, Beethoven also demonstrated a renewed interest in variation forms, as well as fugues. Slow movements from this period became ponderous and philosophical. Beethoven was an inimitable composer between and classical period to romantic period, and his contributions to music history are incalculable

Op.31 no.3 in E- flat major was composed in 1802 and is the only four movement piano sonata in Beethoven's middle period. In the first movement, the resolution of the first chord withheld before finally being resolved in the eighth measures, thereby increasing the tension of the opening. The movements in this sonata are organized in an atypical way in that the second movement is a *Scherzo* where a slow movement is historically more common, and a moderate *Menuetto* is placed where a *Scherzo* movement is expected. Beethoven also exploits the mechanical developments made on the piano, for example, the expanded dynamic range of the instrument.³²

Franz Liszt was a one of the most well-known pianists from Romantic period. He was a virtuoso, a prolific composer, a wonderful teacher, and a brilliant conductor. Many

³² John Gillespie, *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music; An historical survey of music for harpsichord and piano* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1965),184.

of his mature masterworks were formed at Weimar between 1848 and 1861. Liszt was a student of Karl Czerny and became his most famous student. Liszt's compositions expanded the boundaries of piano technique through his use of chromatic passage by octaves, large leaps between chords, double trills in his Transcendental Etudes, and many virtuosic fantasias and transcriptions. Among his compositions, the transcription of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* shows his immense ability to adapt an entire orchestral work to the keyboard. Many of his compositions bear French titles because of his fondness for French literature. His music demonstrates this fondness, as does his personal taste.

Liszt composed twenty Rhapsodies, and the first fifteen were published between 1851 and 1854. In the beginning of No.11, Liszt successfully used trills to recreate impressions of the sound of cimbalom. The following section has a greater sense of swing in the style of a Hungarian dance, which leads into a fast section with brisk broken arpeggios that are full of coloristic effects. The piece is closed with giant chords and leaps that intensify the sense of flourish and bravura.

PROGRAM IV
November 15, 2018
Niles Gallery
12:30 P.M.

Instants d'un Opera de Pekin for Solo Piano

Qigang Chen
(1951-)

Chen is a Chinese-born French composer. Chen's music has yet to be widely performed and studied in the China and France. The plentiful chamber, ballet music, and symphonic works provide a wide range of possibility for performance. *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin* (also known by its English name, *Moments from a Peking Opera*) is one of Chen's quintessential piano works. This is a single movement work for piano solo; he employs theme and variations to build the form of the work. *Instants d'un Opera de Pekin* was composed for the Messiaen International Piano Competition in 2000, it was the required commission piece for each competitor in the piano group (Finale round). Because the work was written for the Messiaen International Piano Competition, Chen was not only required to blend his teacher's compositional technique with his own. In addition to the above requirement, he also chose to borrow some elements Chinese musical styles, of which Beijing opera is the most representative Chinese music element. This lecture-recital is to show how Chinese and Western musical elements can be combined to create a new style of music that represents cultural diversity and appeals to a wide spectrum of audiences.

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Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) in piano performance: University of Kentucky, 2014-2018 (expected)

MM in piano performance: San Francisco Conservatory of Music, 2012-2014

BM in Music: Xinghai Conservatory of music, 2008-2012

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